

VOLUNTEER AND INDUSTRY CREWS

7764

(No. 21 March 1999)

People who work or live in the area where a fire is burning can often be of valuable assistance. Where large numbers of industry and local people are involved in fire control actions, a qualified industry or local representative should report to the liaison officer.

VOLUNTEERS

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Availability and usefulness of volunteer crews varies greatly throughout the state. Therefore, their use can best be left to the judgment of the local unit staff. Well-trained, organized volunteer crews can be of vital importance. CAL FIRE employees should take advantage of every opportunity to use these crews and their leaders. Plans should be made for calling, transporting, working, and caring for them.

INDUSTRY CREWS

7764.2

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The most useful industry crews are those whose potential use was planned before the fire. Generally, this planning would involve a CAL FIRE employee contacting each company's management to determine the number, availability, and experience of firefighting personnel and their leaders. Prior to calling all or part of an industrial group, consideration must be given to the following:

- Advantages to the suppression effort.
- Disadvantages to the industry or private endeavor.

A fire manager must seriously weigh the gravity of an emergency situation and the responsibility involved in managing a crew of "outsiders" against the impact on the industry and the community. To take all of a sawmill crew, for example, might involve hiring personnel who, because of age, health, clothing, and other factors, cannot or should not be hired. To be selective and take only a portion of a crew might leave the industry in a critically nonproductive state.

These potential problems should be discussed thoroughly with each company's management before each fire season.

EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURE

7764.3

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All personnel employed as "volunteers" or called as an "industry crew" must be picked up on form FC-42.

EXAMPLES OF USE OF INDUSTRY AND LOCAL WORKER CREWS

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Examples of how industry and local workers can be used to advantage are as follows:

- **For scouting or as a source of information on areas surrounding the fire:** Detailed knowledge of terrain, access routes, fuel types, possible control lines, etc. can be invaluable to the incident commander in developing his/her strategy. Local people can also guide crews to their destinations in unfamiliar country.
- **To perform the specialized job of snag or timber falling:** Highly qualified fallers who can supply their own saws and service are usually available in timber areas. Two- or three-person teams, if they are obtainable, for each saw are desirable for safety. It is also advisable for safety reasons to use these people on the day shift.
- **As operators on hired dozers and water tender:** It is always best to hire dozers and water tenders with operators for each unit to provide relief whenever possible. The operators servicing specific machines will provide the best overall performance. When available, a maintenance vehicle should be requested so that operators may do their own servicing on dozers.
- **To act as liaison for industry and local personnel or equipment:** When a company provides large numbers of personnel or equipment, a representative of that company should be designated as agency representative to act as liaison.
- If a number of companies are involved, one industry representative may be used as an overall "agency representative."
- **To help in determining damage to timber stands:** Current information on damage is often required while fires are still burning out of control. Cruise sheets are often available from the company(s) involved. Local persons may have a personal knowledge of the approximate volume of timber on the area.
- **To take initial action on fires:** Prearranged agreements can be made with local companies to respond to fires within designated areas. These areas will usually involve their own lands but may also include adjacent ownership.

- **To provide emergency communications:** "Ham" operators can be of assistance during periods of extreme fire emergency to establish point-to-point radio contacts.

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